

Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/745,546	OKAJIMA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	George Eng	2643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 8/11/2005.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 5-8 and 18-35.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

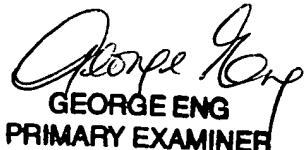
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.



GEORGE ENG
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EXAMINER'S STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. Claims 5-8 and 18-35 are allowed.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Applicant's invention is drawn to provide a virtual communication device configuring apparatus at a user end being adapted to configure a virtual communication device by combining a plurality of communication devices that are accessible by the virtual communication device configuring apparatus so as to form the virtual communication device capable of handling various types of communications regardless of changes in the plurality of communication devices (i.e., the virtual communication device configuring apparatus (22, figure 2) operated at a user end comprising an information separating unit (32, figure 2) for separating a combined or multiplexed signal received from a calling terminal (26, figure 2) over a network (25, figure 2) via a signal interface (34, figure 2), communication protocol units (27₁ through 27_N, figure 2) interconnected with the plurality of communication devices (20₁ through 20_N, figure 2), which are usable by a user and a terminal management unit (24, figure 2) for identifying management information such as communication attributes, including at least one of a coding scheme, media content processing capability, audio format processing capability, and video format processing capability, of the plurality of communication devices in order to supply control signals to and controls operations of the communication protocol units, the signal interface, information coding scheme converting units, the information combining unit and the information separating unit depending on the kinds of information data input and output by the plurality of communication devices and the calling terminal, thereby forming a communication between a virtual device

being configured by the virtual communication device configuring apparatus with the plurality of communication devices usable by a called party and the calling terminal usable by a calling party).

Applicant's independent claims 18 and 35 each recite, *inter alia*, an apparatus for configuring a virtual terminal that including a plurality of communication device accessible to the apparatus with a structure as defined in the specification (pages 5-12) including a signal interface configured to receive a calling signal from a calling terminal, said calling signal including at least a first content part and a second content part, said second content part containing information of a different media content than said first content part; a terminal management unit configured to identify communication attributes of the plurality of communication devices accessible to said terminal management unit and identify which of said plurality of devices are capable of processing information corresponding to at least one of said first content part and said second content part; and a virtual terminal interface configured to send information corresponding to said first content part to a first communication device identified by said terminal management unit as being capable of processing said information of said first content part, and send information corresponding to said second content part to a second communication device identified by said terminal management unit as being capable of processing information of the second content part, wherein each of the first communication device and the second communication device is one of the plurality of communication devices. Applicant's independent claims 18 and 35 comprise a particular combination of elements, which is neither taught nor suggested by the prior art.

Applicant's independent method claim 34 recites, *inter alia*, managing terminal management information associated with a plurality of communication devices, said terminal management information including indicia of communication attributes of the plurality of communication devices; identifying communication attributes of the plurality of communication devices, and identifying which of said plurality of communication devices are capable of processing information corresponding to at least one of said first content part and said second content part; and sending information corresponding to said first content part to a first communication device identified in said identifying step as being capable of processing said information of said first content part, and sending information corresponding to said second content part to a second communication device identified in said identifying step as being capable of processing information of the second content part, wherein each of the first communication device and the second communication device is one of the plurality of communication devices. These steps, in combination of the remaining steps, are neither taught nor suggested by the prior art.

Accordingly, Applicant's claims are allowed for these reasons and for the reasons recited by Applicants in Amendments filed 9/12/2003, 4/7/2004, 11/9/2004 and 6/13/2005, and Pre-Brief Conference Request 8/11/2005.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Yasuda et al. (US PAT. 5,887,136) discloses a communication system capable of automatically determining the combination of a plurality of communication terminals having different processing capabilities at called user sides and connecting such combinations of the communication terminals in accordance with a media specified by a user, thereby providing a high level of freedom for combined connection, wherein the communication system comprising a plurality of network terminals (109-114, figure 1) connected with a plurality of communication terminals (101-108, figure 2) through a network (2, figure 1) for determining at least one of a combination of one or more media and a combination of one or more terminals which are available for each of users participating in communication on the basis of contents of the available terminal information storage section and the available media information storage section in accordance with a communication request and setting a call connection for some of the terminals, which correspond to the at least one combination determined by said plurality of network terminal (the entire patent). However, Yasuda fails to specifically teach an apparatus for configuring a virtual terminal at a user end that includes a plurality of communication devices accessible by the apparatus, wherein the apparatus capable of performing the acts of separating the first content part from the second content part of the calling signal, identifying communication attributes of the plurality of communication devices connected to the apparatus, identifying which of the plurality of devices are capable of processing information corresponding to at least one of said first content part and said second content part at the user end, sending information corresponding to said first content part to a first communication device identified as being capable of processing said information of said first content part, and sending information

corresponding to said second content part to a second communication device identified as being capable of processing information of the second content part.

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George Eng whose telephone number is (571) 272-7495. The examiner can normally be reached on Tue-Fri 7:30 AM-6:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis A. Kuntz can be reached on (571) 272-7499. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



George Eng
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Art Unit 2643